



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON CHILD PROTECTION
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 381B
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
<http://www.blueribboncommissionla.com>**

Friday, November 15, 2013

9:00 AM

AUDIO LINK FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING. (13-5410)

Attachments: [AUDIO](#)
 [VIDEO-PART 1](#)
 [VIDEO-PART 2](#)

Present: Chair David Sanders, Vice Chair Leslie Gilbert-Lurie, Vice Chair Hon. Dickran M. Tevrizian (ret.), Commissioner Hon. Terry B. Friedman (ret.), Commissioner Gabriella Holt, Commissioner Marilyn L. Flynn, Commissioner Richard Martinez, Commissioner Dan Scott and Commissioner Janet Teague

Absent: Commissioner Andrea L. Rich

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order. (13-5266)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sanders at 9:05 a.m.

2. Approval of the October 28, 2013 regular meeting minutes. (13-5267)

On motion of Commissioner Holt, seconded by Vice Chair Tevrizian, and unanimously carried, this item was approved.

Ayes: 9 - Chair David Sanders, Vice Chair Leslie Gilbert-Lurie, Vice Chair Hon. Dickran M. Tevrizian (ret.), Commissioner Hon. Terry B. Friedman (ret.), Commissioner Gabriella Holt, Commissioner Marilyn L. Flynn, Commissioner Richard Martinez, Commissioner Dan Scott and Commissioner Janet Teague

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Andrea L. Rich

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. PRESENTATIONS

3. Presentation by (times listed are approximate and may vary):

- 9:00 a.m. - Los Angeles County Department of Coroner - Denise Bertone, Coroner Investigator
- 9:30 a.m. - DCFS Back-End Social Worker Panel, including representatives from the Family Maintenance and Reunification Unit, the Voluntary Family Maintenance Unit, and an AB 12 worker
- 10:00 a.m. - Panel with representatives from various relative caregiver organizations
- 10:30 a.m. - Panel with representatives from the Association of Community Human Service Agencies, Foster Family Agencies and Group Homes
- 11:00 a.m. - Representative of Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services
- 11:30 a.m. - Stuart House, a program of the UCLA Rape Treatment Center at Santa Monica Hospital - Gail Abarbanel, Executive Director, Rape Treatment Center (RTC) (13-5268)

Denise Bertone, Coroner Investigator, Department of Coroner, presented a brief overview of her knowledge and experience as a Coroner Investigator for children. Ms. Bertone responded to questions posed by the Commission regarding various causes of death in children and the training and reporting procedures the department utilizes. Ms. Bertone expressed concern over the need for departmental collaboration and the need to reassess first responder training.

A Panel of Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Back-End Social Workers, Aruna Patel, Supervising Social Worker, Roohinee Hemmens, Children's Social Worker (CSW), Larry Golan, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Supervisor and David Green, CSW, addressed the Commission and responded to questions posed pertaining to their work load, the challenges of locating appropriate placements for children, employee needs and the importance of hiring more CSW's.

Members of the Community Coalition, Joseph Duval, Madelyne Gordon, Executive Director, Grandparents as Parents, and Relative Caregivers Mary Lee, Reina Villatoro and Peggy Scott addressed the Commission and responded to questions posed regarding the lack of resources, systemic and procedural challenges, collaboration between relative caregivers and social workers and recommendations for kinship resources.

Representatives from the Association of Community Human Service Agencies (ACHSA), Bruce Saltzer, Executive Director, Sil Orlando, Past President and Executive Director of Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services, Wendy Carpenter, Chair of ACHSA's DCFS Committee and Associate Executive Director of Penny Lane Centers, Charles C. Rich, Board President and Executive Director of David and Margaret Youth and Family Services, and Arturo Flores, former resident of Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services, addressed the Commission and responded to questions posed pertaining to recommendations on the effort to improve the child welfare system, collaboration with all departments and the variety of programs provided.

Representatives of Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Jose R. Perez, Chief, Bureau of Program and Policy, and Jackie Mizell Burt, Program Director, addressed the Commission and responded to questions posed regarding the Department's administered programs and policies, benefits offered to domestic violence victims, the qualification factors and the progression of resources.

Gail Abarbanel, Founder and Executive Director, Rape Treatment Center (RTC), presented an overview of the programs and resources available to victims of sexual abuse. Ms. Abarbanel explained the model program known as Stuart House and the collaborating efforts among all agencies. Ms. Abarbanel presented recommendations on improving the reporting policies and training pertaining to sexual abuse cases and responded to questions posed by the Commission.

Members of the public, Helen Lynn, Melinda Waite, Dennis Etlin, Don Saxton, Patrick O'Rourke, Teresija Sigmund, Rodica Moody, and Yadira Gonzales addressed the Commission.

III. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEM

4. Discuss and take appropriate action on proposed meeting schedule. (13-5269)

A proposal was made to add the following meeting date to the Commission's Schedule:

Friday, December 13, 2013 at 2:30 p.m.

On motion of Vice Chair Gilbert-Lurie, seconded by Commissioner Flynn, and unanimously carried, the proposed meeting date was added to the Commission's schedule.

Ayes: 9 - Chair David Sanders, Vice Chair Leslie Gilbert-Lurie, Vice Chair Hon. Dickran M. Tevrizian (ret.), Commissioner Gabriella Holt, Commissioner Marilyn L. Flynn, Commissioner Richard Martinez, Commissioner Dan Scott and Commissioner Janet Teague

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Hon. Terry B. Friedman (ret.) and Commissioner Andrea L. Rich

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

5. Items not posted to the agenda, to be presented and (if requested) referred to staff or placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take immediate action came to the attention of the Commission subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (13-5270)

Chair Sanders briefly addressed the Commission and indicated that the listening and learning period in the past three months has been critical in carrying out the charge approved by the Board of Supervisors on June 25, 2013. Chair Sanders read the Board approved motion detailing the charges given to the Commission and noted that the Commission does not have authority over budget and hiring, strategic plans, and does not deliver services, including placement services, which are issues that have been mentioned by some of the presenters and members of the public. While these issues are all critical, recommendations will remain within the charge and authority conferred by the Board and must stay within those limitations. The Commission is directed by the Board charge to develop recommendations that will be compiled in a report no later than the end of the calendar year. The report will consist of at least three to four areas of focus informed by the Committee work, staff work, research and public meetings. The next few meetings will focus on report priorities and also continue exploration of the Department of Mental Health and First 5.

Commissioner Holt briefly reported on her activities in reviewing previous recommendations. Commissioner Scott referenced the progress made by law enforcement agencies and will continue to improve strides pertaining to the investigative process of child abuse cases. Commissioner Flynn referenced interviews in which common themes are being identified and issues that safety frontline practitioners encounter. Vice Chair Gilbert Lurie highlighted the efforts of Commissioner Rich, Commissioner Teague and Commissioner Martinez and emphasized the Commission's approach in presenting sound recommendations with plans to follow up.

6. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on items of interest that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission. (13-5271)

Members of the public, Maxine Diggs, Monica Waggoner, Georgia Thompson, Michael Jackson, Martine Singer, Patrick O'Rourke, Teresija Sigmund, Rodica Moody, Kathryn Icenhower, Matt Harris, and Melinda Waite addressed Commission.

7. Adjournment. (13-5272)

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 1:13 p.m.